

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO  
EASTERN DIVISION**

**In the Matter of:**

**United States of America**

**v.**

**Gregory S. RIPPEL**

**109 N. Central Avenue**

**Columbus, OH 43222**

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**Case No.:** 2:24-mj-363

**Magistrate Judge Vascura**

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Anna Edgar, a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations, being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Your affiant, assigned to the HSI Office of the Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) in Columbus, Ohio, makes this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint to arrest Gregory S. Rippel (RIPPEL) for a violation of Title 18 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections (§§) 2252 and 2252A –receipt, and/or possession of child pornography. Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing an arrest warrant, your affiant did not include each and every fact known concerning this investigation. Your affiant did not withhold any information or evidence that would negate probable cause. Your affiant set forth only the facts that are believed to be necessary to establish probable cause that RIPPEL committed the violation listed above.

2. Your affiant has been employed by HSI since January 2010. Your affiant gained experience through completion of the Federal Criminal Investigator Training Program (CITP) and completion of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent Training (ICESAT) program. Your affiant's primary duties are and have been the investigation of violations of Titles 8, 18, 19, and 21 of the United States Code. Your affiant has received specialized training and has experience in the above areas. Your affiant has completed numerous applications for criminal complaints, summonses, and search warrants. Your affiant has been assigned to the Franklin County Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force since 2019, where she has conducted and assisted with investigations involving child exploitation and child sexual abuse.

3. The information set forth in this affidavit is based upon evidence that has been gathered and your affiant's observations and experiences, as well as those of co-workers and other law enforcement officers.

**FACTS SUPPORTING PROBABLE CAUSE**

4. On or about July 15, 2024, your affiant received information from the Columbus Division of Police (CPD) that officers were dispatched to a sober living facility located at 109 North Central Avenue, in Columbus, Ohio the previous day. According to CPD reports, when officers arrived at the facility, a resident advised he "saw child porn" on his roommate's cellular phone. The reporting party informed officers that his roommate, RIPPEL, asked him to download an online fantasy sportsbook application to RIPPEL's cell phone. The reporting party stated while he was in possession of RIPPEL's cell phone, he observed a thumbnail image of a young boy who appeared to be approximately 8 years old. The reporting party opened the thumbnail image, which opened into the Mega mobile application, revealing hundreds of pictures and videos of young male children around 8 years old, engaged in sexual acts. Your affiant knows the Mega app to be a secure and private cloud storage and file hosting service where users can chat and share files with one another.

5. According to the CPD report, the reporting party showed the images and videos contained on RIPPEL's cell phone to another resident at the facility. Officers interviewed the second resident, who verified the reporting party's claim that RIPPEL's cellular phone contained child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

6. CPD officers seized RIPPEL's cell phone and transported him to Columbus Police Headquarters for an interview. After receiving his *Miranda* warnings, RIPPEL waived his rights and agreed to speak with CPD detectives. During the interview, RIPPEL admitted to possessing "adult and child porn" on his cell phone. Detectives allowed RIPPEL to access his cell phone during the interview with their supervision. RIPPEL opened the Mega app on the cellular device which displayed, according to RIPPEL, 200-300 videos of children engaged in sexual acts. RIPPEL told detectives that the children in the videos were between the ages of 5 to 14 years old. RIPPEL opened one video which depicted two young boys that appeared to be under the age of

ten, touching each other's penises. RIPPEL stated he received the child pornography from users on the Mega and Telegram apps.

7. After RIPPEL finished sharing the contents of his Mega account, CPD detectives maintained custody of the cell phone. The cell phone was placed into airplane mode to remove the device from the cellular network and preserve evidence. Additionally, the Wi-Fi and Bluetooth settings on the cell phone were disabled.

8. On July 15, 2024, your affiant conducted an online search of the Ohio Sexual Offenders Registry and noted RIPPEL was listed as a Tier II Sex Offender, having been convicted of Pandering Obscenity Involving a Minor (O.R.C. 2907.321) in October of 2023 in the state of Ohio. On October 10, 2023, RIPPEL was sentenced to four years of intensive supervised release in the state of Ohio, to commence immediately and end on October 10, 2027. Furthermore, RIPPEL was ordered to serve a 120-day jail sentence to begin on March 9, 2024 and end on approximately July 7, 2024.

9. On July 15, 2024, your affiant took custody of RIPPEL's cell phone from the CPD to complete a forensic extraction and analysis on it. On July 17, 2024, your affiant applied for and was granted a federal search warrant for RIPPEL's cell phone, specifically a Motorola Moto G Stylus.

10. A preliminary forensic review of the Motorola Moto G Stylus revealed approximately 245 images depicting child pornography. The images were found within the Telegram application on RIPPEL's cell phone, with a modified date range between February 16, 2024 and July 17, 2024. In addition, multiple thumbnail images were also located on the device with modified date ranges between February 17, 2024 and March 9, 2024. The content within the recovered images generally depicted prepubescent and pubescent aged males engaged in the lascivious exhibition of their genitalia, masturbation, sex acts with adult males to include oral and anal as well as sex acts with other minor children. Approximately 8 of those images depicted infants and/or toddlers engaged in various sexual acts described above. For example, the following images were noted by your affiant:

- One image, titled *-5113879063831773922\_1109.jpg*, which depicted a prepubescent male laying on top of what appears to be an adult male. The penis of the adult male was inserted into the anus of the prepubescent male in the photograph.

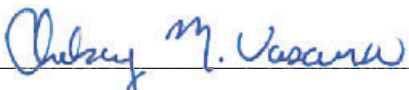
- One image, titled -5087366737975946465\_121.jpg, which depicted two prepubescent males, who appear to be unclothed, laying on a bed. The penis of one of the prepubescent males is inserted into the mouth of the other minor male.

10. Based upon the above information, your affiant submits that there is probable cause to believe that Gregory S. RIPPEL has committed offenses in violation of 18 U.S.C. Sections 2252 and 2252A – the distribution, receipt, and possession of child pornography. Therefore, your affiant respectfully requests this court issue a criminal complaint and arrest warrant.

ANNA S EDGAR Digitally signed by ANNA S  
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Date: 2024.07.24 11:41:10 -04'00'

Anna Edgar  
Special Agent  
Homeland Security Investigations

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED TO BEFORE ME THIS 24th DAY of July, 2024.

  
Magistrate Judge Chelsey Vascura  
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio